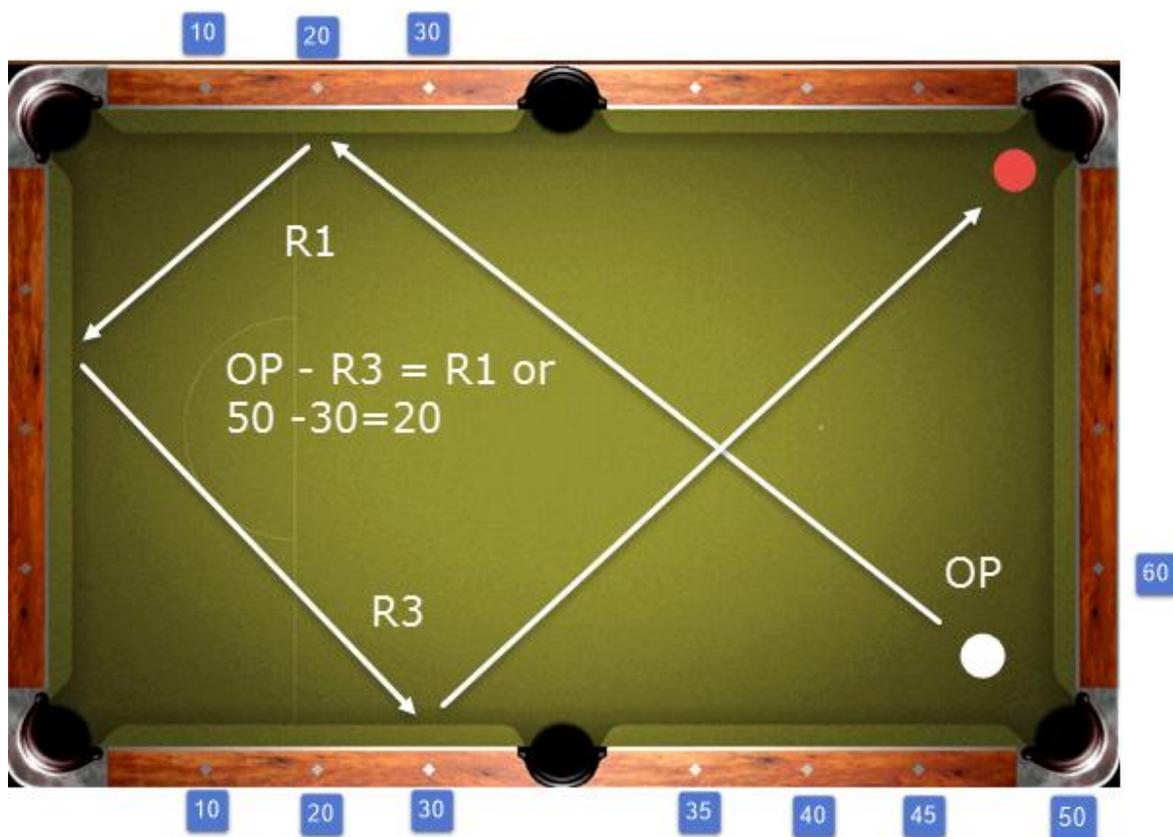


## Three rails made simple

- know how the table runs
- eliminate difficult calculations
- eliminate 2:1 ratio adjustments to find your line

According to multiple sources, the “corner 5” principle applies to three rail shots.



Memorize the numbers corresponding to the diamonds.

The principle is simple. Subtract your target point on the last rail (R3) from your origination point (OP) to find the spot on the first rail (R1).

Here:  $50 - 30 = 20$



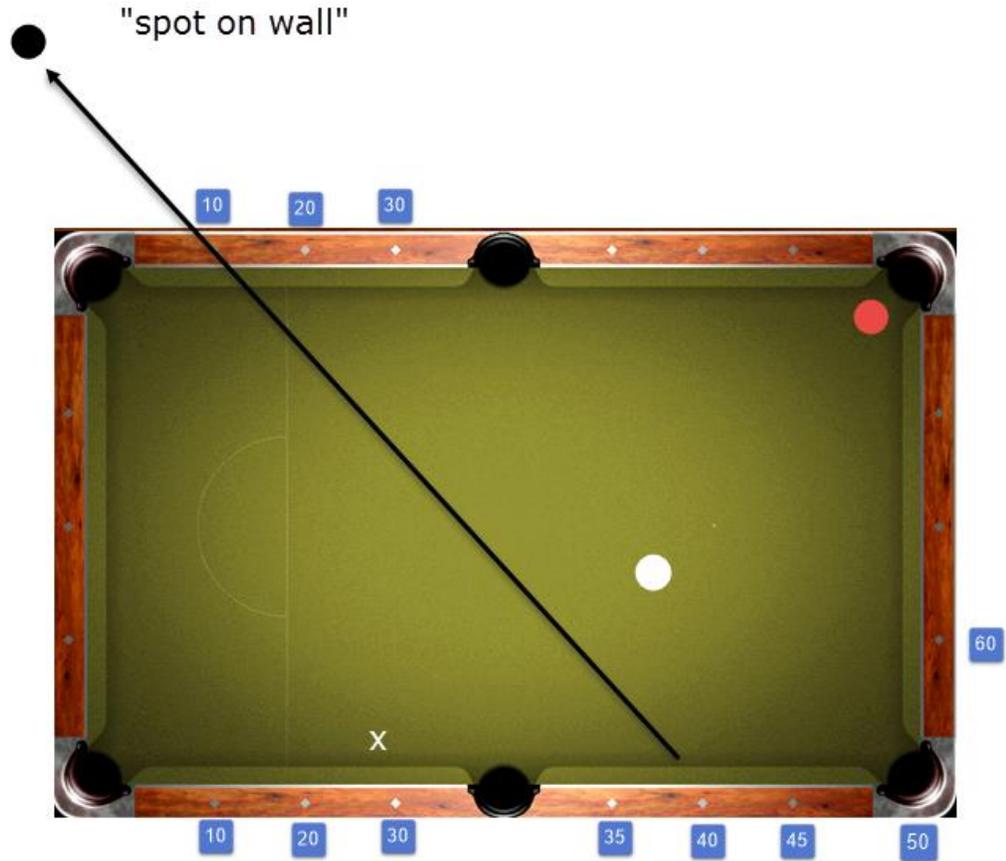
On my table, R3 “30” goes to corner pocket. So, I know I have to hit “30”.

But what if the ball is not aligned with  $40-10=30$  or  $45-15=30$ ?

Commonly, we adjust from the closest line towards the Cue Ball (CB), and generally with a 2:1 ratio for the tip and butt of the stick.

Or, we make calculations in our head like  $43-R3=R1$  or  $43-30=13$ . Now 13 is our R1 spot.

But, there is a far easier method combining the “spot on the wall” and the “corner 5” principles. It’s easy, quick, and accurate.

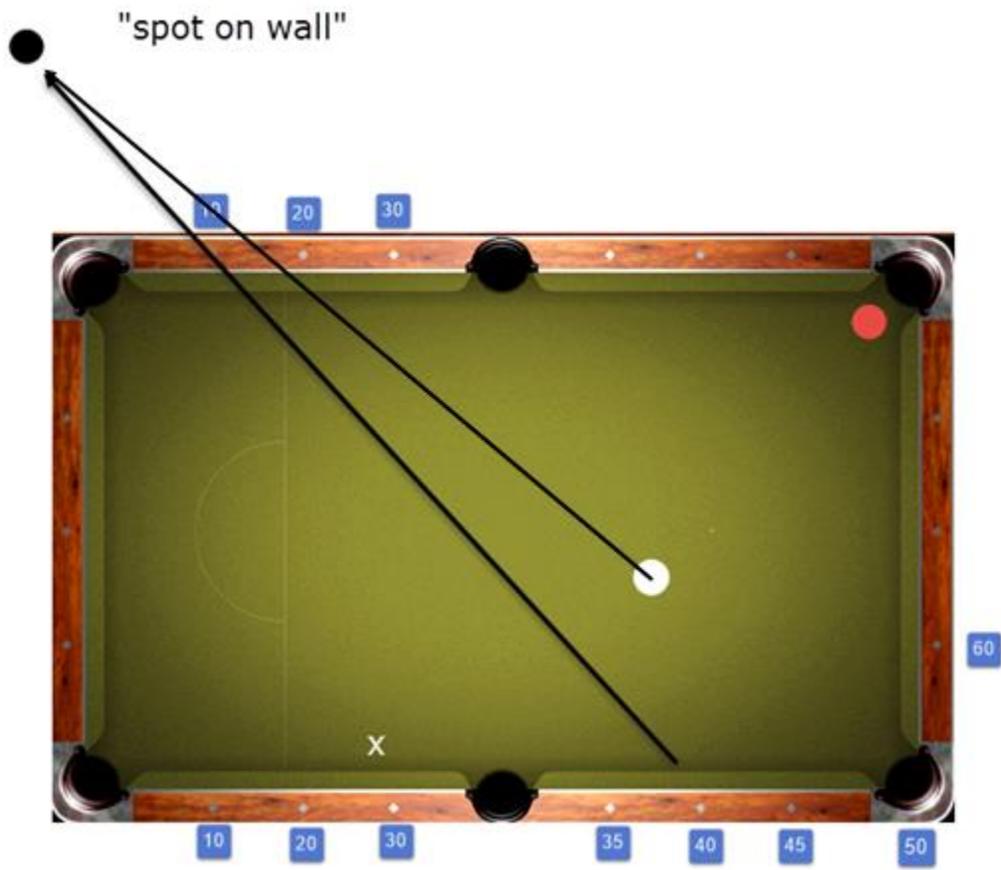


Since I know I have to hit "30" (X), ANY calculation will do that leads to 30, regardless where the CB is.

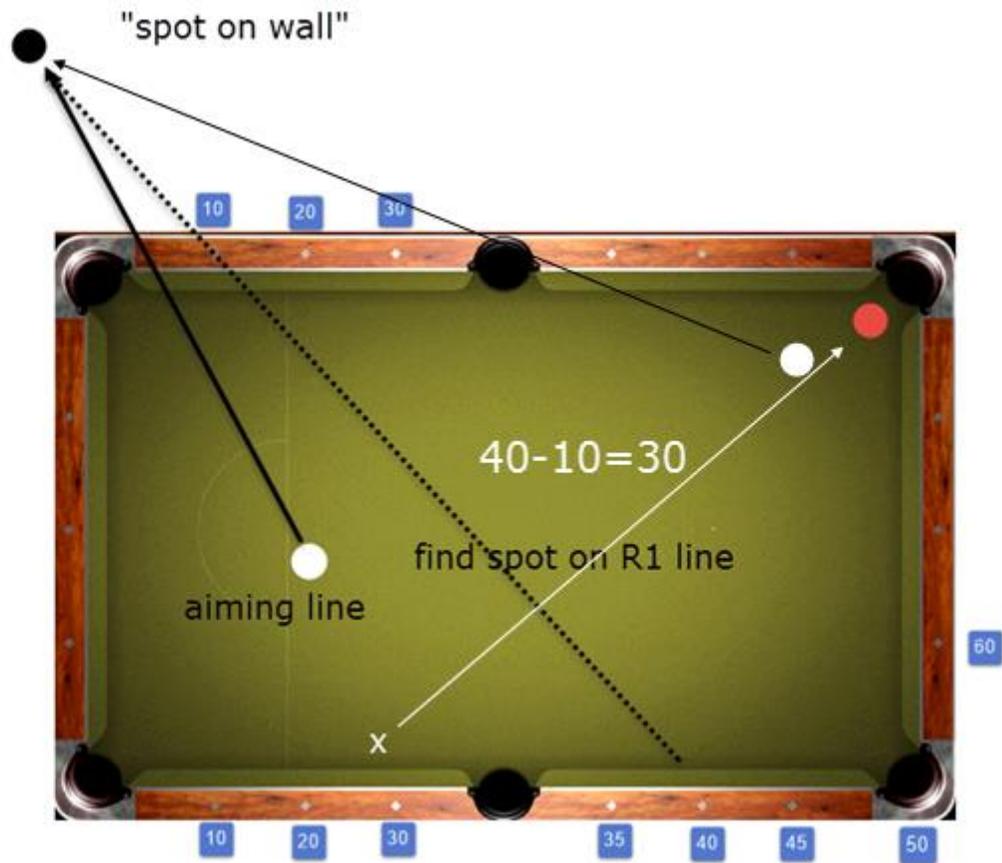
- 35-5
- 40-10
- 45-15
- 50-20

In this illustration I used 40-10 and follow the line towards a spot on the wall.  
 Aim for the "spot on the wall" to get to the corner pocket to pot the red ball.

"no more difficult calculations"  
 "no more 2:1 ratio adjustments"

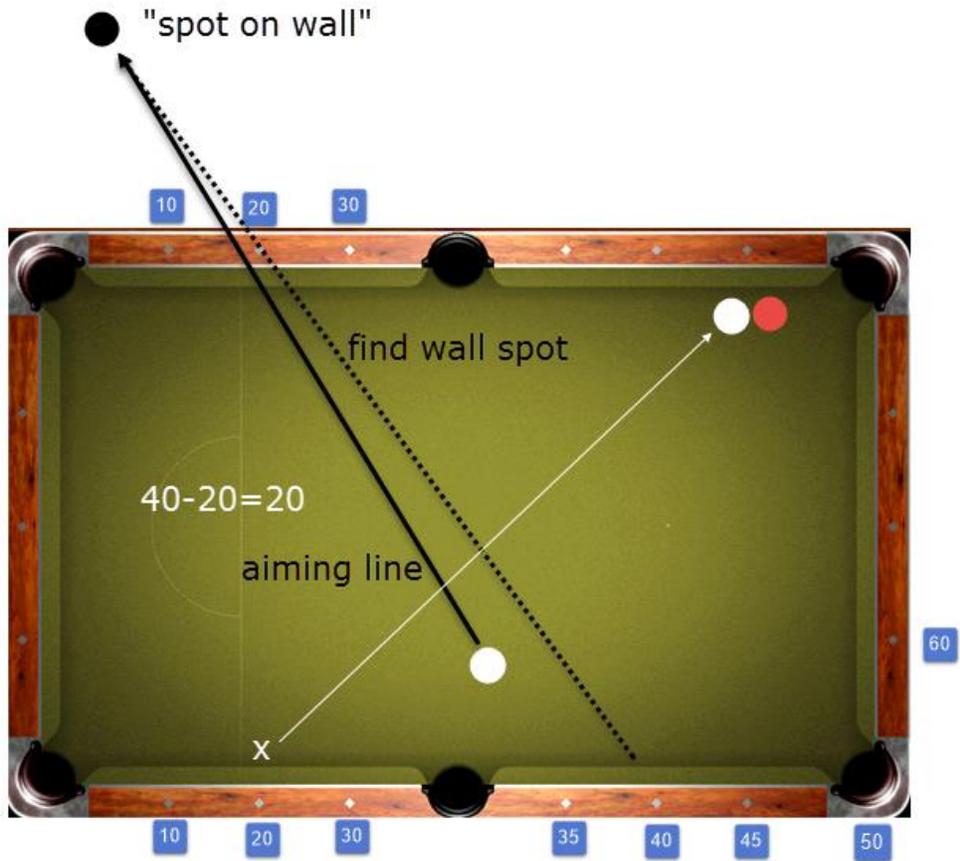


Aiming line toward spot on the wall added.



It does not matter where the Cue Ball is.  
 "Anywhere on the table" will do.

Of course, there are always adjustments to make.  
 Running English (1/4 - 1/2- full tip e.g. depending on how close CB is to R1)  
 Each table runs a tad different.

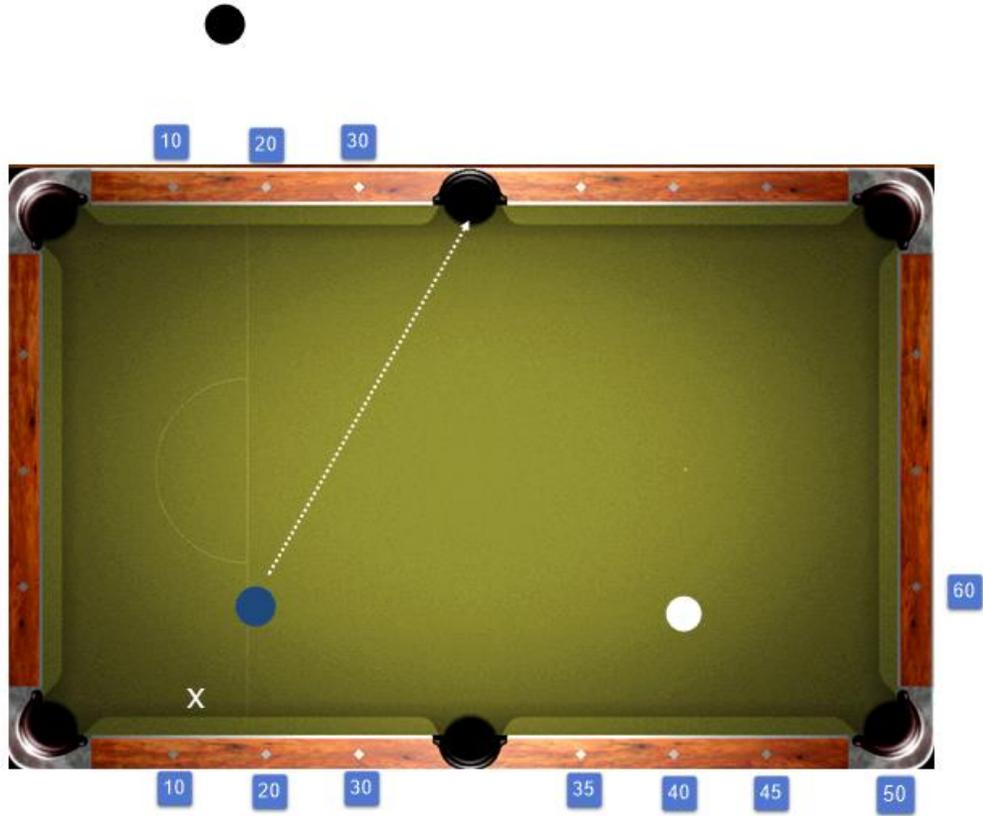


On my table, R3 "20" goes toward first diamond .  
Hence, find a line that goes to 20.

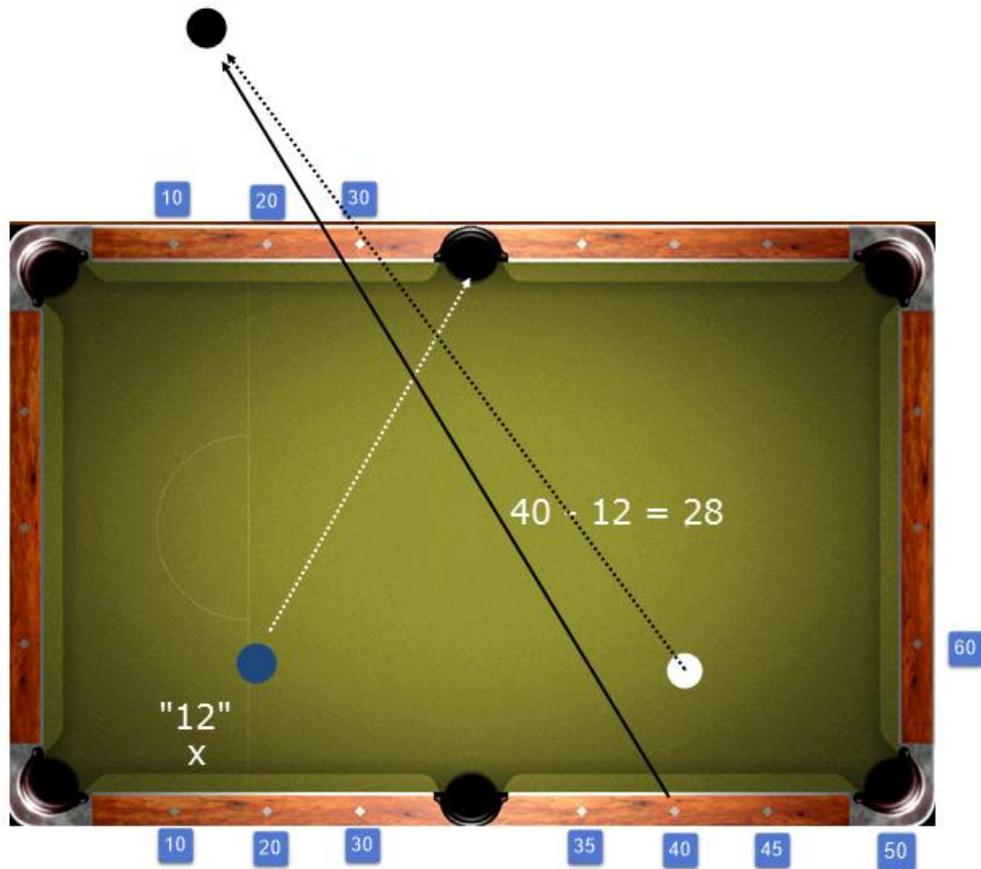
I used  $40 - R1 = R3$  or  $40 - 20 = 20$

Apply same spot on the wall principle.

What if you are in a pickle?



Your blue "hail mary" ball is "out of reach", or is it?



I want to kick the blue ball in side pocket.

Find the spot you want to hit on the third rail. I chose 12.

$40 - 12 = 28$  to get spot on wall

And aim for that spot with the Cue Ball

Although such shots are difficult to make, you will at least hit the ball 90% of the time and not give up ball in hand.

Marcel Elfers is an avid pool player,  
and a fan of Dr. Dave <http://billiards.colostate.edu/>